

News Release

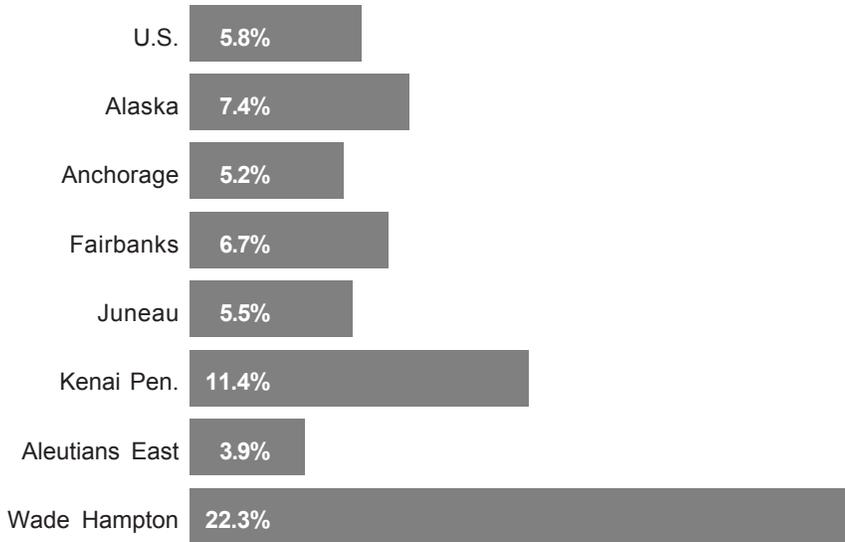
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April Unemployment Declines

April Unemployment for Selected Areas



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section (Detailed table on reverse)
CA indicates census area; other areas are boroughs. All rates not seasonally adjusted

Alaska Nonfarm Wage and Salary Employment

	preliminary		revised		Changes from	
	04/03	03/03	04/02	03/03	04/02	
Total Nonfarm Employment	289,200	286,500	286,600	2,700	2,600	
Natural Resources & Mining	10,100	10,100	11,100	0	-1,000	
Construction	13,600	13,000	13,400	600	200	
Manufacturing	10,000	11,500	10,000	-1,500	0	
Trade, Transportation, Utilities	58,400	58,100	58,700	300	-300	
Information	7,000	6,800	7,100	200	-100	
Financial Activities	13,300	13,200	13,200	100	100	
Leisure & Hospitality	27,500	25,700	26,800	1,800	700	
Government	83,500	82,900	82,000	600	1,500	

Government includes employees of public schools, the University of Alaska, and certain federally-recognized tribal entities.
Benchmark date: March 2002
Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Seasonally Adjusted Unemployment Rates

April 2003:	Alaska 7.2%	U.S. 6.0%
March 2003:	Alaska 6.8%	U.S. 5.8%
April 2002:	Alaska 7.6%	U.S. 5.9%

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Alaska's unemployment rate fell four-tenths of a percentage point in April to 7.4 percent, according to Dan Robinson, a labor economist with the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development. The unemployment rate typically falls in April as Alaska moves toward the peak employment months of summer, although the decline this year was smaller than in recent years. Despite the smaller decrease, the unemployment rate remains four-tenths of a percentage point lower than it was at this time last year. The comparable national rate fell from 6.2 percent to 5.8 percent.

The number of unemployed Alaskans dropped by more than 1,200 in April to 24,873. That number is up by 353 persons since April 2002, or 1.4 percent. The state's labor force—the combination of employed and unemployed persons—has grown significantly over the year due mostly to higher employment numbers. At 334,791 the labor force is 6.3 percent larger than it was in April of last year.

Four of the state's six economic regions had lower unemployment rates in April. The Northern Region saw an increase of eight-tenths of a percentage point to 14.0 percent and the Southwest Region's rate rose one and seven-tenths of a percentage point to 13.3 percent. The Northern and Southwest Regions are also the only two regions in the state with higher unemployment rates than in April 2002.

The state's three biggest cities all saw declining unemployment rates in April. Anchorage continues to have lower unemployment rates than the rest of the state, and at 5.2 percent was slightly below April 2002's number. Fairbanks also saw a modest decline in April, falling from 7.1 percent to 6.7 percent. Juneau's rate fell five-tenths of a percentage point to 5.5 percent. The Aleutians East Borough recorded the state's lowest unemployment rate at 3.9 percent. The highest rate in the state was in the Wade Hampton Census Area at 22.3 percent.

Preliminary estimates show that wage and salary jobs grew by 2,700 in April. The Leisure & Hospitality sector of the economy accounted for most of the growth, adding 1,800 new jobs from March to April. Most of the growth in that sector has come from the restaurant industry although employment in accommodations (hotels, inns, RV parks, etc.) is becoming more plentiful as the summer visitor season approaches.

Labor Force by Region and Census Area

	Labor Force			Unemployment			Rate			Employment		
	04/03	03/03	04/02	04/03	03/03	04/02	04/03	03/03	04/02	04/03	03/03	04/02
Alaska Statewide	334,791	334,545	314,979	24,873	26,127	24,520	7.4	7.8	7.8	309,918	308,418	290,459
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region	186,514	186,704	173,563	10,933	11,401	10,625	5.9	6.1	6.1	175,581	175,303	162,938
Municipality of Anchorage	152,214	152,517	142,464	7,903	8,128	7,711	5.2	5.3	5.4	144,311	144,389	134,753
Mat-Su Borough	34,300	34,187	31,099	3,030	3,273	2,914	8.8	9.6	9.4	31,270	30,914	28,185
Gulf Coast Region	33,765	33,376	32,401	3,581	4,036	3,687	10.6	12.1	11.4	30,184	29,340	28,714
Kenai Peninsula Borough	22,231	21,828	21,305	2,535	2,683	2,568	11.4	12.3	12.1	19,696	19,145	18,737
Kodiak Island Borough	6,451	6,574	6,223	460	750	524	7.1	11.4	8.4	5,991	5,824	5,699
Valdez-Cordova CA	5,083	4,974	4,873	586	603	595	11.5	12.1	12.2	4,497	4,371	4,278
Interior Region	51,777	50,802	48,475	3,936	4,123	3,806	7.6	8.1	7.9	47,841	46,679	44,669
Denali Borough	1,253	1,254	1,151	138	167	110	11.0	13.3	9.6	1,115	1,087	1,041
Fairbanks North Star Bor.	45,467	44,549	42,509	3,057	3,169	2,911	6.7	7.1	6.8	42,410	41,380	39,598
Southeast Fairbanks CA	2,670	2,654	2,559	318	359	363	11.9	13.5	14.2	2,352	2,295	2,196
Yukon-Koyukuk CA	2,388	2,345	2,256	424	429	422	17.8	18.3	18.7	1,964	1,916	1,834
Northern Region	9,369	9,447	9,123	1,312	1,250	1,230	14.0	13.2	13.5	8,057	8,197	7,893
Nome Census Area	3,461	3,507	3,410	465	459	475	13.4	13.1	13.9	2,996	3,048	2,935
North Slope Borough	3,414	3,452	3,321	364	349	333	10.7	10.1	10.0	3,050	3,103	2,988
Northwest Arctic Borough	2,494	2,488	2,391	483	442	421	19.4	17.8	17.6	2,011	2,046	1,970
Southeast Region	37,456	36,988	36,329	3,002	3,310	3,245	8.0	8.9	8.9	34,454	33,678	33,084
Haines Borough	1,247	1,227	1,184	182	186	161	14.6	15.2	13.6	1,065	1,041	1,023
Juneau Borough	16,411	16,118	15,803	904	960	913	5.5	6.0	5.8	15,507	15,158	14,890
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	7,157	7,005	7,035	670	664	806	9.4	9.5	11.5	6,487	6,341	6,229
Pr. of Wales-Outer Ketchikan	2,616	2,674	2,617	324	434	416	12.4	16.2	15.9	2,292	2,240	2,201
Stikta Borough	4,327	4,312	4,201	230	307	267	5.3	7.1	6.4	4,097	4,005	3,934
Skagway-Hoonah-Angoon CA	2,019	2,005	1,980	231	258	264	11.4	12.9	13.3	1,788	1,747	1,716
Wrangell-Petersburg CA	3,339	3,322	3,213	387	437	379	11.6	13.2	11.8	2,952	2,885	2,834
Yakutat Borough	340	326	295	73	65	38	21.5	19.9	12.9	267	261	257
Southwest Region	15,909	17,230	15,088	2,108	2,007	1,927	13.3	11.6	12.8	13,801	15,223	13,161
Aleutians East Borough	1,715	1,872	1,630	67	54	58	3.9	2.9	3.6	1,648	1,818	1,572
Aleutians West Census Area	2,637	2,856	2,502	232	203	209	8.8	7.1	8.4	2,405	2,653	2,293
Bethel Census Area	6,281	6,796	5,885	931	894	783	14.8	13.2	13.3	5,350	5,902	5,102
Bristol Bay Borough	531	575	522	58	53	71	10.9	9.2	13.6	473	522	451
Dillingham Census Area	1,883	2,077	1,813	212	234	220	11.3	11.3	12.1	1,671	1,843	1,593
Lake & Peninsula Borough	602	655	553	104	106	78	17.3	16.2	14.1	498	549	475
Wade Hampton CA	2,260	2,400	2,183	504	463	508	22.3	19.3	23.3	1,756	1,937	1,675

Benchmark: March 2002

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section. • Comparisons between different time periods are not as meaningful as other time series produced by Research and Analysis. • The official definition of unemployment currently in place excludes anyone who has not made an active attempt to find work in the four-week period up to and including the week that includes the 12th of the reference month. Due to the scarcity of employment opportunities in rural Alaska locations, many individuals do not meet the official definition of unemployed because they have not conducted an active job search. These individuals are considered not in the labor force.